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City of San Jose Public Art Program in partnership with ZER01: The Art and Technology Network Receives 'Our Town' Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

***'Silicon Valley Inside/Out' is one of 51 grants nationwide selected
to support creative placemaking***

San Jose, CA July 12, 2011—The City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program (SJPA) in partnership with ZER01: The Art and Technology Network (ZER01) will receive an *Our Town* grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), one of only 51 grants awarded nationwide. The \$250,000 NEA funding will be matched by SJPA and ZER01 and used to promote and enhance downtown San Jose's livability and arts engagement through the initiation of *Silicon Valley Inside/Out (SV I/O)*. *SV I/O* will wed the creativity of the technology and cultural sectors to create a mash-up that will help downtown San Jose define the look and feel of the "Capital of Silicon Valley." The goal of the project is to stimulate a more engaged community and promote new partnerships between art and technology.

Our Town is the NEA's latest investment in creative placemaking, through which partners from both public and private sectors come together to strategically shape the social, physical, and economic character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities.

National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Landesman said, "Communities across our country are using smart design and leveraging the arts to enhance quality of life and promote their distinctive identities. In this time of great economic upheaval, *Our Town* provides communities an opportunity to reignite their economies."

SV I/O is an expansion and enhancement of efforts by SJPA and ZER01 to engage a broader spectrum of downtown San Jose stakeholders in the conversation of livability through creative placemaking. *SV I/O* will immerse people in the vitality of Downtown by adding a technology-activated layer of cultural engagement. *SV I/O* will make Downtown a lab where artists will seek new resources, and explore how an 'interactive city' might function. Through the promotion of new partnerships between arts organizations, artists, tech workers and technology companies, *Silicon Valley Inside/Out* will stimulate sustainable connections between culture, business and community by creating a series of temporary and permanent arts projects, all of which will be situated in downtown San Jose, connecting the vibrant SoFA District with the Convention Center and San Jose State University via the adjacent San Carlos Street corridor. *The long term goal of SV I/O is to build sustainable bridges between technology and art to define the sense of place in Downtown.*

SV I/O will launch three parallel initiatives: 1) the creation of a Strategic Advisory Committee that will frame and guide the development of opportunities, 2) the development of 3 new technology-activated public art projects, and 3) a series of temporary projects. These multidisciplinary art projects will reflect the region and will include opportunities for active public participation.

According to Kim Walesh, San Jose's director of economic development and chief strategist, "San Jose has led the nation in bringing together the art and technology sectors for community and economic benefit for some time. The *Our Town* grant will allow San Jose's Public Art Program and ZER01 to step up collaboration with local stakeholders on an exciting program to increase Downtown San Jose's cultural and economic vitality. As the Capital of Silicon Valley, San Jose understands that a great place for innovation is a place that supports the evolution of new boundary-crossing art forms, and *SV I/O* is an amazing opportunity to contribute to this evolution."

Joel Slayton, executive director, ZER01: The Arts and Technology Network, added, "Place is critical, and the realization of *Silicon Valley Inside/Out*, as a result of the generous Our Town grant, provides us with a unique opportunity to demonstrate how arts organizations have the ability to stimulate cultural and economic sectors, and inform the changing nature of collaboration, experimentation, and invention. The public art projects generated through *SV I/O* will create platforms for community-wide participation that will be the key component of the 2012 ZER01 Biennial - and then remain in place for future activation. Created through dialog between artists, arts organizations and Silicon Valley-based technology companies, the art projects will mirror the innovation of the region by responding to the idea of place-making in Silicon Valley through the activation of space."

In partnership SJPA and ZER01 have collaborated in commissioning interactive permanent and temporary projects both in Downtown and as part of the Art+Technology Program at the San Jose International Airport (a program recently recognized by Americans for the Arts as part of a Public Art Program of the Year Award).

The City of **San Jose Public Art Program**, a program of the Office of Cultural Affairs, commissions destination-quality temporary and permanent artworks to enhance urban spaces and reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future. The program engages high-visibility and high-impact locations, active community involvement and innovative artistic expression to reinforce the image of San Jose as the capital of Silicon Valley. The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. For more information visit www.sanjoseculture.org.

ZER01: The Art and Technology Network, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization, cultivates and showcases art and ideas that enlarge our vision of the world. ZER01's mission is to inspire creativity at the intersection of art, technology, and digital culture, and create platforms for the exploration and presentation of work dealing with the critical issues of our time by some of the most creative cultural, academic and business minds in the world. ZER01 fulfills a self-proclaimed mission to stimulate corporate and public interest in the possibilities afforded by intersecting the arts and technology by creating pathways for both organizations, institutions, corporations and individuals to come together and engage, interact, and explore real-world innovation challenges and collaborations that serve to inspire linear and lateral creative thinking. ZER01 is the producing organization for the ZER01 Biennial, the highly acclaimed international contemporary art biennial focused on the convergence of art and technology. For more information about ZER01 visit: www.zero1.org

The **San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs**, a division of the Office of Economic Development, is the City of San Jose's lead agency for supporting and promoting the development of a rich arts and cultural environment for this diverse city's nearly one million residents, its workers who live in neighboring communities, and its many visitors. It fosters cultural development through cultural funding programs, cultural workforce development, special event services, and public art. For more information visit www.sanjoseculture.org.

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector.

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